

UCC Review Committee Recommendations to Enhance Services

In December 2011, a UCC Review Committee was formed to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the University Counseling Center, in anticipation of hiring a new director. The review focused on three critical areas: clinical care, educational outreach, and operations. Three subcommittees made up of clinicians, faculty, staff, and students analyzed the UCC service model based on best practices and also reviewed the staffing model, resource allocations, budget implications, and training and development strategies. The review concluded that the UCC is providing an array of services that are meeting student needs. The committee also made a number of recommendations to strengthen the UCC. Implementation of these recommendations has already begun and will continue over the coming days, weeks, and months.

The major recommendations are as follows:

Continued Emphasis On “Students First”

- **Reduce the cost of counseling sessions.** The UCC will no longer charge a fee per student/per session for group counseling services.
- **Clarify the “no show/late cancellation” fee policy.** Not showing up for or cancellation of a scheduled appointment less than 24 hours before the appointment will result in a \$30 late cancellation charge. We believe this will result in fewer no shows and late cancellations, which will allow clinicians to see more students.
- **Offer more group counseling sessions.** Group counseling has increased in popularity among students.
- **Evaluate the “six-free” pilot program at the end of the academic year to see if it should be continued or expanded.** Students are offered six free counseling sessions under the program.
- **Assess student satisfaction with UCC services.** Student clients will be surveyed and their feedback evaluated for future improvements.

Clinical Care through Direct Service, Education and Outreach, and Prevention

- **Develop an advisory council to better integrate services provided by the counseling centers around the university.** A council on mental health issues will be created to include multiple stakeholders from across the university, including representatives from each of the on-campus counseling centers and clinics.
- **Efficient coordination of services, including better integration with the Office of the Dean of Students’ CARE Network and increased integration with Student Health Services to foster stronger collaboration to care for students.**
- **Expand the use of social media to reach students.**
- **Increase outreach to the university community, including increased interaction with and support of the GW Active Minds peer educators.**

Enhanced Staffing, Finance, and Operations

- **Conduct annual review of current mental health crisis management policies and procedures.**
- **Create a comprehensive five-year strategic plan for the UCC.**
- **Review existing UCC staffing model, position descriptions, minimum qualifications, recruitment, and transition process.**
- **Continue working with Human Resources on staff development opportunities.**
- **Explore the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) standards and accreditation process.**

This is not a static process. With the onboarding of a new Director of the UCC, we will continue to periodically review UCC operations and will make adjustments in order to continue to enhance our quality counseling services and programs.